



Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to obtain proposals for state projects that promote the development and deployment of cost-effective and environmentally sustainable electric power resources – primarily with respect to renewable energy resources, and the use of combined heat and power technologies - for the long-term benefit of Vermont electric customers.

Applicants may submit proposals for projects in the following categories: *Pre-Project Financial Assistance*, *Small-Scale Systems*, *Large-Scale Systems*, and *Special Demonstration Projects*. Applicants may submit multiple proposals in any category, but each project must be submitted as a separate stand-alone proposal. (For example: if an applicant is requesting both pre-project funding assistance for a renewable energy system as well as funding for the cost of the system, they must be submitted as separate stand-alone proposals.) All projects must be based in Vermont.

There is a maximum award of \$25,000 for *Pre-Project Financial Assistance*, \$60,000 for *Small-Scale Systems*, and \$250,000 for all other projects. It is anticipated that a total of \$2.5 million in funding will be awarded. *Pre-Project Financial Assistance* projects require a 20% cash match from applicants. All other projects require a 50% match, no more than 25% of which can be in-kind match. Match greater than the required amounts is encouraged and preference may be given to projects requesting lower funding amounts than comparable projects.

Proposals must arrive to the Department of Public Service (DPS) office by 4:00 P.M. on Monday, July 9, 2007. Applicants mailing proposals should allow adequate time to ensure receipt of their proposal(s) by the deadline. Proposals received after 4:00 PM on Monday, July 9th will not be considered. Proposals are limited to 15 pages, with no less than an 11 point font and one inch margins. One original signed hard copy, ten additional copies, and an electronic copy of the proposal must be delivered to Kelly Launder, Vermont Department of Public Service. Proposals and questions should be addressed to:

Kelly Launder
Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601
Phone: (802) 828-4039
Email: kelly.launder@state.vt.us

BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Vermont General Assembly established the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund through Act 74 (10 V.S.A. § 6523). The Act specifies that the Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund will be established and funded through proceeds due to the state under the terms of two memoranda of understanding between the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS) and Entergy Nuclear VT and Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., and by any other monies that may be appropriated to or deposited into the Fund. The CEDF will receive payments from Entergy through 2012.

Act 74 specifies that the Fund shall be managed to promote:

- The increased use of renewably produced electrical, thermal energy, and combined heat and power technologies in the state;
- The growth of the renewable energy-provider and combined heat and power industries in the state;
- The creation of additional employment opportunities and other economic development benefits in the state through the increased use of renewable energy and combined heat and power technologies;
- The stimulation of increased public and private sector investment in renewable energy and combined heat and power related enterprises, institutions, and projects in the state.

Additional information on the CEDF purpose and goals is available in the Strategic Plan, which is posted on the DPS website at: www.publicservice.vermont.gov. A copy of the Plan can also be obtained by contacting Kelly Launder at (802) 828-4039 or kelly.launder@state.vt.us

PROJECT CATEGORIES

The purpose of this solicitation is to fund projects that promote the development and deployment of cost-effective and environmentally sustainable electric power resources. To reach this goal, funding will be awarded to projects in the following four categories: *Pre-Project Financial Assistance*, *Small-Scale Systems*, *Large-Scale Systems*, and *Special Demonstration Projects*.

Pre-Project Financial Assistance

This category includes feasibility studies and pre-development activities to develop new renewable energy generation facilities and combined heat and power systems, which may require high-risk, early-stage activities and for those projects that do not have the resources to finance pre-project activities. Projects under this category may include: renewable energy resource assessments; site assessments; environmental impact and regulatory analysis; technical and engineering feasibility studies; engineering designs; and economic and financial feasibility studies. Other similar projects not specifically listed above will also be considered.

The maximum grant award for this category is \$25,000 and requires a 20% cash match. Projects must be completed within 6 months of award.

On-farm projects **are not** eligible as funding is currently available for feasibility studies and technical assistance through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, *Agricultural Economic Development Special Account*. Contact Dan Scruton at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture for additional information on this funding opportunity by phone at 802-828-3836 or by email at dan@agr.state.vt.us.

Small-Scale Systems

This category includes the installation of microturbines, solar air heating systems, geothermal heating systems, and fuel cells at residential or small commercial buildings. Renewable energy systems totaling no more than 15kW of capacity per installation such as micro-hydroelectric are also eligible. All electric generation projects must be grid-connected. Other similar type systems not specifically listed above will also be considered.

The maximum grant award for this category is \$60,000 and requires a 50% match, no more than 25% of which can be in-kind match. Projects must be completed within 2 years of award.

Solar electric, solar hot water and small-scale wind systems **are not** eligible for funding under this category as incentives are currently available under the *Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program* for these types of systems. Additional information on the *Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program* is available at: www.nerc-vt.org or by calling the Renewable Energy Resource Center at 877-888-7372.

Large-Scale Systems

This category includes renewable energy and combined heat and power projects greater than 15 kW in capacity located at commercial, industrial, institutional, and public facilities. Renewable energy projects may include, but is not limited to: solar electric; farm, landfill and sewer methane recovery; low emission, advanced biomass power; and wind (except projects which are eligible for the Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program as noted below). This may include utility-scale installations. All electric generation projects must be grid-connected. The installation of microturbines, solar air heating systems, geothermal heating systems, and fuel cells at large commercial or industrial buildings are also eligible.

The maximum grant award for this category is \$250,000 and requires a 50% match, no more than 25% of which can be in-kind match. Projects should be completed within 2 years of award.

Wind systems that are eligible for funding under the *Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program* (including on-farm, school, and local/state government systems) **are not** eligible for funding. Additional information on the *Vermont Solar and Small Wind Incentive Program* is available at: www.nerc-vt.org or by calling the Renewable Energy Resource Center at 877-888-7372.

On-farm projects cannot apply for funding under this category if they have received or plan to receive Vermont Agency of Agriculture, *Agricultural Economic Development Special Account* funding, unless the funding from the Agency is for pre-project assistance. Contact Dan Scruton at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture for additional information on the *Agricultural Economic Development Special Account* funding by phone at 802-828-3836 or by email at dan@agr.state.vt.us.

Special Demonstration Projects

This category includes projects that demonstrate and facilitate the development and commercialization of innovative renewable energy products, technologies, technology applications, and processes. All electric generation projects must be grid-connected. These projects must be designed to focus on market building and technology deployment strategies as opposed to traditional research and development activities. Projects should also include the following: a technical and economic analysis of the technology application or demonstration; expected project impact on the near-term commercialization of this technology; and dissemination of project information to potential users of the technology.

The maximum grant award for this category is \$250,000 and requires a 50% match, no more than 25% of which can be in-kind match. Projects should be completed within 2 years of award.

On-farm projects cannot apply for funding under this category if they have received or plan to receive Vermont Agency of Agriculture, *Agricultural Economic Development Special Account* funding, unless the funding from the Agency is for pre-project assistance. Contact Dan Scruton at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture for additional information on the *Agricultural Economic Development Special Account* funding by phone at 802-828-3836 or by email at dan@agr.state.vt.us.

INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM APPLICANTS

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight forward, concise description of the applicant's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Fancy bindings, colored displays, promotional materials, and so forth, are not desired. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content. Information in the applicant's proposal which should be held confidential must be clearly marked as confidential and comply with an exemption from public inspection as per 1 V.S.A. § 317(c).

Grant proposals should be no longer than 15 pages, with no less than an 11 point font and one inch margins (resumes **do not** count toward the 15 page limit) and must include at minimum the following information:

Identification of Organization

State the full name and address of the organization and, if applicable, other subcontractors that will perform, or assist in performing, the work. Include the organization's federal identification number.

Authorized Negotiators

Include the names and phone numbers of personnel authorized to negotiate the proposed contract with the State. All proposals must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the party (or parties) submitting the proposal.

Personnel

Applicants shall have demonstrable knowledge, skills and experience as it relates to the required work. Proposals should include a description of the applicant's prior experience in all areas relevant to the project. The proposal must identify all persons that will be employed in the proposed work by skill and qualifications. Identify key personnel by name and title and provide a resume for each (resumes **do not** count toward the 15 page limit). Subcontractors must be

listed, including the firm name and address, contact person, and complete description of work to be subcontracted. Include descriptive information concerning subcontractor's organization and abilities.

Work Plan

Describe in narrative form the plan for accomplishing the work required to complete the project. Indicate the number of hours allocated to each task and which staff member(s) will complete the tasks. Include a time-related chart showing each event, task, and decision point in the work plan. Also describe the plan for project oversight, quality assurance measures, and financial management and which staff member(s) will have this responsibility. Include a list of all permitting requirements for the project and whether any of the permits have been obtained.

Environmental, Economic, & Societal Impact

Applicants should describe the specific environmental, economic, and societal benefits created through support of the project such as: the reduction in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants; reduction of fossil fuel use; and the number of new jobs created.

Installations at residential and commercial buildings must certify that the building has met required state energy codes. Applicants should also describe any high performance or beyond code energy efficiency improvements that have been made in the buildings.

Budget Considerations

Applicants must submit a proposed budget for the project and include narrative explanations. The following cost elements should be included:

Personnel (position, rate, hours)

Travel (mileage can not exceed the state rate of \$0.485 per mile)

Supplies & Materials

Other (specify)

Total Direct Costs

Indirect Costs (may not exceed 23.64% of direct costs)

BUDGET TOTAL

The budget must also include the applicants cash and/or in-kind match for the project. There is a maximum award of \$25,000 for *Pre-Project Financial Assistance*, \$60,000 for *Small-Scale Systems*, and \$250,000 for all other projects. *Pre-Project Financial Assistance* projects require a 20% cash match from applicants. All other projects require a 50% match, no more than 25% of which can be in-kind match. Match greater than the required amounts is encouraged.

The Issuing Office will expect to share in any cost savings realized by the selected applicant. Therefore, final grant reimbursement will be based on actual line item expenditures. The Issuing Office's final share of each line item expenditure will be paid out at the proportionate rate of participation as established by that line item in the grant budget and/or any approved amendment to the budget.

Additional Information

Include any other information that is believed to be pertinent, but not specifically requested elsewhere in this RFP.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The DPS and the CEDF Investment Committee will evaluate all proposals received based upon qualifications of the individuals proposed to perform the work, relevance of previous experience, completeness and quality of the proposal, how well the project meets the goals of the CEDF, reasonableness of cost, and any other criteria it deems relevant. Acceptance or rejection of any or all proposals will be determined by the exercise of the Department's sole discretion.

All proposals are subject to an evaluation by the DPS, the CEDF Investment Committee, and any other non-departmental reviewers deemed necessary. The DPS reserves the right (but in no way is obligated) to interview the top prospective candidates to aid in the selection process.

The award of the contract will be made based on the following criteria:

1. Experience & Qualifications

- Knowledge and/or experience in the relevant project area.
- Experience with similar projects.
- Adequate staffing for described work.
- Previous experience with state or federal grants/contracts.

2. Work Plan

- Clarity and reasonableness of work plan, including definition and timeliness of tasks to be performed.
- Development timeframe relative to similar proposed projects.
- Viability and strength of strategy to implement, operate, and evaluate the project.
- Plan and capacity for project control and financial management are sufficiently described.
- Reasonable timetable (priority may be given to those who can begin immediately after the grant is awarded).

3. Project Characteristics

- Suitability of the site for the proposed projects.
- Project risks relative to similar proposed projects.
- Potential for replicability (the degree to which the project provides lessons applicable to other projects).
- Potential for public visibility.

4. Environmental, Economic, and Social Impact

- Specific environmental, economic and societal benefits are addressed. (Selection will take a project's contribution to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and to the state's renewable energy objectives, including development of resources eligible for the Sustainably Priced Energy Enterprise Development (SPEED) Program into consideration.)
- Projects that benefit public buildings and/or will be located in transmission constrained areas may receive preference in the evaluation process.
- Projects that include high performance design and/or energy efficiency improvements may receive preference.

5. Budget

- Budget line items and amounts are sufficiently described and justified.

- Costs are reasonable and competitive. (Preference may be given to projects requesting lower funding amounts than comparable projects.)
- Degree of financial leverage (through funding obtained from the federal government, private investors, companies, etc.).

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The DPS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this RFP for any reason, to waive minor irregularities in any proposals received, and to negotiate with any party in any manner deemed necessary to best serve the interests of the State.
2. The DPS shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by any party in preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
3. The DPS reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP at any time if the best interest of the State requires such action.
4. News releases pertaining to this RFP, grant award, or the project shall not be made without prior written approval from the DPS.
5. All parties submitting proposals shall be Equal Opportunity Employers. During the duration of the performance of this contract, the contractor will be expected to comply with all federal, state and local laws respecting non-discrimination in employment.
6. The DPS will pay for actual work performed and expenses incurred under this project up to the specified grant amount. Specific payment provisions will be arrived at upon mutual agreement of the parties. All payments will require the submission of an itemized billing of work performed to date in sufficient detail to justify payment.
7. The selected applicants shall agree to grant to the State a nonexclusive, irrevocable license to reproduce, translate, publish, use, and dispose of all material developed as a result of this project. The selected applicants further shall agree that they will not copyright any material developed as a result of the project.
8. Before commencing work grant Recipients must provide certificates of insurance to show that the following minimum coverages are in effect. It is the responsibility of the Recipient to maintain current certificates of insurance on file with the State through the term of the grant.

Workers' Compensation: With respect to all operations performed, the Recipient shall carry workers' compensation insurance in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont.

General Liability and Property Damage: With respect to all operations performed under the grant, the Recipient shall carry general liability insurance having all major divisions of coverage including, but not limited to:

Premises - Operations
 Products and completed Operations
 Personal Injury Liability
 Contractual Liability

The policy shall be on an occurrence form and limits shall not be less than:

\$1,000,000 Per Occurrence
\$1,000,000 General Aggregate
\$1,000,000 Products / completed products aggregate
\$ 50,000 Fire Legal Liability

Automotive Liability: The Recipient shall carry automotive liability insurance covering all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles, used in connection with the Grant. Limits of coverage shall not be less than: \$1,000,000 Combined single limit

No warranty is made that the coverages and limits listed herein are adequate to cover and protect the interests of the Recipient for the Recipient's operations. These are solely minimums that have been set to protect the interests of the State.

9. The DPS assumes no liability in any fashion with respect to this RFP or any matters related thereto. All prospective contractors and their subcontractors or successors, by their participation in the RFP process, shall indemnify, save and hold the DPS and its employees and agents free and harmless from all lawsuits, causes of action, debts, rights, judgments, claims, demands, damages, losses and expenses or whatsoever kind in law or equity, known and unknown, foreseen and unforeseen, arising from or out of this RFP and/or any subsequent acts related thereto, including but not limited to the recommendation of a contractor and any action brought by an unsuccessful applicant.